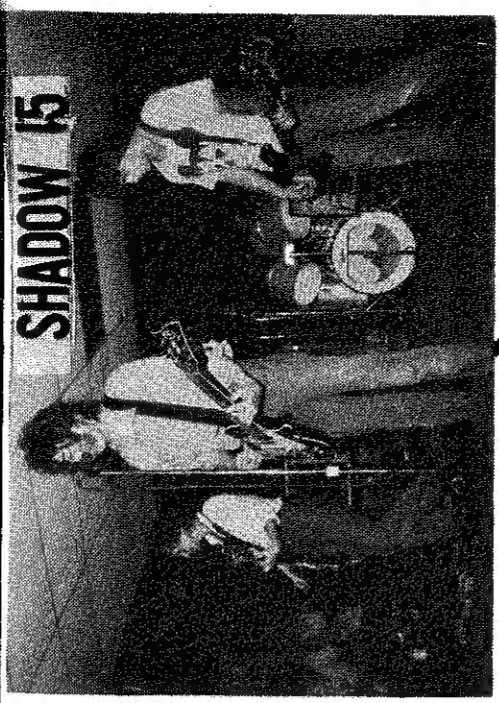


# HA SHUI LLE INTELLIGENCE OF PROFIT



SHADOW 15

FREE

22  
JULY '84

LOTS INSIDE!



RING OF FIRE



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# NASHVILLE intelligence report

22

News + views  
Review



## SHADOW 15



Shadow 15 is a Nashville-based band whose music is loud, fast-paced and exciting. The band consists of Shannon Liggon on guitar, Barry Nelson on bass, Scott Feinstein on lead vocal and guitar, and Chris Feinstein on drums. Shadow 15 is fast becoming one of the most popular new bands in Nashville, and were voted one of the best new bands by the NIR Reader's Poll a few months ago. The band also played at this year's NIR Benefit. The following is an interview between Duana Callahan and three of the band's members: Barry Nelson, Chris Feinstein, and Scott Feinstein done prior to the benefit show.

CF That varies.  
SF We really don't try to sound like anybody. We listen to everything. I listen to everything from real old country...

BN Like the old seventies stuff, like the Clash, stuff that made us want to play this kind of music.

SF ...to guitar stuff. Bands like U2 and Echo and the Bunnymen, that type of stuff. Agent Orange and Social Distortion.

BN We don't try to sound like anybody. If we do, it just happens that way.

NIR Is all the material original? Do you do any covers?

SF No, all of them are ours.

NIR Who does the writing?

SF Barry does most of it and we kind of collaborate.

BN Chris and I have written some together.

CF Music-wise.

BN I write the majority of the songs.

CF I can't write a lyric. I print my name and I'm happy. (laughs)

NIR How successful have you been in playing to Nashville audiences?

CF & BN (Incoherent mumblings)

SF People seem to like us more each time.

BN We had a bad show the second time we played, but we did real good with Rain Parade.

CF Our last show was pretty good.

BN People like us better after they've seen us a few times, 'cause they get to know the songs better.

SF We're not very active onstage. We're not the kind of people you'll see jumping up and down. Once in a while we'll get into something and that's when we'll do it. But we just gotta be true to ourselves. Someone told us once that our energy was more in our music than in our stage presence, 'cause that's where we want it to be--in the lyrics and the music. We're getting better onstage, though.

NIR Have you played any out-of-town gigs at all yet?

SF Not yet, but we're working on it.

BN We're gonna play in Atlanta at 688. Then possibly Knoxville. The Right Profile want us to do some shows with them in North Carolina.

NIR I know you've been working in the studio. Will you be getting any demos out soon?

SF Yeah, two songs.

BN We're hoping to release some kind of something soon.

CF It's being mixed.

BN We're hoping to release something on independent label.

NIR Any upcoming gigs?

BN We're doing the NIR Benefit this year.

NIR I thought that was why I was interviewing you.

BN But that's all we've got lined up right now. We're hoping to get out of town real soon.

NIR Where did the name "Shadow 15" come from?

BN It was my idea to use the word "shadow."

SF We wanted something that made no sense.

BN Like "pizza triangle." After we got "shadow" we thought of "47 Shadows", but I thought we should use a lower number.

CF We just started counting, "Shadow 1", "Shadow 2"...

NIR What's your ultimate goal?

BN To put out records and hope people listen to them.

SF To have fun--not to get rich.

BN To be able to quit my job. To travel around--we don't ever really want to play huge shows, though. You can make enough money playing clubs.

CF As long as we have enough money for beer and Wheaties.

NIR First of all let's talk about how the band got together. Barry, tell me why you and Shannon left Young Grey Ruins.

BN Because Bill Smartt, our sax player, quit and went away to school. We kept playing for a little while, then Scott and Chris met Shannon and we all started playing together.

NIR Scott and Chris, what were you two doing before you met Shannon?

CF Sitting at home playing with a blues band called Short Term Effect.

NIR A blues band?

CF Yeah, it was blues with various rock covers. Larry Scott, the bass player, and I were looking for a new guitar player and we started sort of scouting around. So we went to the show just for some strange reason...

BN Last year's NIR Benefit.

CF ...and we saw Young Grey Ruins.

NIR Was that the last show Young Grey Ruins did together?

CF Yeah, it was sad. (laughs)

NIR Sad? Why?

CF I could see moisture collecting in their eyes.

(Laughs) Anyway, we saw Shannon...

SF Chris fell in love with Shannon. (laughs)

CF ...and we were impressed. We were impressed with her guitar playing also.

BN They don't even remember seeing me.

SF I wasn't there.

CF Barry was in the closet or something. Way back in the back. We were just kinda going "Humm. Nice bass machine." And we approached Shannon after the show. She said yeah, she was interested in trying something new. So we tried it and then Shannon decided that it would be best to stick with Barry because they had material together. Which was a lie. It was all Barry's material. So he kinda tagged along to practice one day and we thought he was kinda outa (laughs) so we kept him. We kinda knew Scott would be there.

BN We started playing a few songs that we had played with Young Grey Ruins. So then finally we just decided to stay with Scott and Chris.

NIR Describe the music you play.

CF Trash rock.

SF It's just something that happened, that's all.

NIR Is it any sort of fusion between what Short Term Effect was doing and what Young Grey Ruins were doing?

SF No, it's completely different.

CF As much as Shannon and Barry think it sounds like Young Grey Ruins' stuff, it's too thrashy to sound like anything Young Grey Ruins would have come up with.

NIR "Thrashy?"

BN It's the same stuff, just trashed more.

SF It's louder and faster.

CF With more guitar. We strapped a guitar on Scott and said "play."

BN We have better material.

CF It's garage rock.

NIR How long has the band been playing together now?

SF About a year.

CF Yeah, close to a year.

NIR How much has your music changed since you first started playing together? Has it changed much since you've been going into the studio?

CF I think it's changed since we first started playing.

BN Just because it's gotten better. We've dropped alot of songs that we were doing at first. Some songs we never even got around to doing.

NIR What kind of music influenced you?

## In This Issue:

WILL RAMBEAUX.....	2
LOCAL NEWS, ETC.....	3
BENEFIT PHOTO SPREAD.....	4
JOE "KING" CARRASCO.....	5
VINYL REVIEWS.....	5
GET SMART!.....	7
OH-OK.....	7



The state of rock music in Nashville is never very stable, yet, there is a new sensation currently happening on the local front. This sensation is RING OF FIRE. With only six gigs done in town they have already established a reputation for hard-driving shows and they haven't come close to doing what they can and will do.

RING OF FIRE is developing a sound built around the traditional foundations of rock'n'roll--blues, country, a little jazz tightly integrated with all the power that modern rock can offer. The songs have incredible rhythm variations and dynamics built into their movement and they roll together like an endless-thunderstorm of sound. Lead guitarist Michael writes most of the music with Les and Mark creating the bass and drum foundation that holds these songs together.

The songs are penned mainly by Melora although Les has added a couple of the newer numbers. The songs are written with a feeling of emotional honesty which intentionally sets them apart from the boy-meets-girl syndrome of pop muzak. As Melora puts it, "My songs come from the heart...we're reflecting southern culture and literature." Indeed, the lyrics are packed with images of love-gained and love-lost but are steeped in a sensuous alienation that makes them far from typical. The songs tend to offer a slice-of-life portrait in a Faulkneresque way yet with a modern sensibility which is enchanting.

On stage RING OF FIRE creates a gale-force show which literally blows an audience around. The moment they begin playing kicks off forty-five minutes of pure existential joy that gives rock'n'roll its validity. Mark keeps the set moving along with his driving drumbeat--song rolls into song as his floor-tom and rack-toms keep the beat going. Les keeps this frantic rhythm stable with his energetic bass guitar attack--one expects him to slide right off the stage or else to bash Melora in the head with his guitar neck as he stops and spins back from the stage edge. Michael's guitar work, however, is the musical highlight within the band. First it's a chainsaw--then a harp--then a machine gun--then a violin. There are many soft subtleties interwoven throughout the hard-core sound and they are blended together in a most fantastic manner. Out in front of this wall of sound is the sensual energy that Melora projects as she swirls and dances upon the stage. Moreover, her voice serves as a dynamic contrast to the music's rawness as she delivers her lines with an all-too knowing innocence.

RING OF FIRE is not doing anything that unique--good rock'n'roll has always been built around this basic formula. However, they have taken this tried and tired standard and delivered it in such a powerful way that what was old is again revealed as excitingly fresh. Already they have made a good impression outside of Nashville with their opening set for the Cramps in Chicago which received praise from critics and fans alike. Now they are fine-tuning their set and making plans to take their show out on the road in the near future. The sound is indeed fresh and exciting--their stage show is packed with an energetic attack that demands a danceable response.

Their goal is to take this sound and spread it around the country; they are RING OF FIRE and they're out to encircle rock fans everywhere with their flames!





Will Rambeau and the Delta Hurricanes are a Nashville-based band who play a sort of Scorchers-type country/rockabilly blend of music, for those of you who don't already know. The band consists of Will Rambeau on lead vocal and guitar, Kenny Greenberg on lead guitar, Kelly Looney on bass and Rick Rowell on drums. The following interview with Rambeau, done by Duana Callahan, is the first NIR has printed since the new band was formed a few months ago.

**NIR Describe your music.**

**WR** Uh, it's the sound of Jerry Lee Lewis humping Marianne Faithfull in the back of a '65 Mustang

**NIR Okay.** Do you do all the writing yourself?

**WR** Yeah, pretty much. A few of the songs we do live were co-written with other people but 98% of it came from my own wretched pen.

**NIR Describe your relationship with Kenny Greenberg -- I understand he plays with several other people. Where do you think his final loyalty lies?**

**WR** (Laughs) I believe Kenny's an honest man and what he says to me is that this is his number one priority. You know, Kenny, he's out there trying to make a living. In his heart of hearts he wants to be in a hot shit rock-n-roll band, but until that happens, he's gotta keep his iron in a lot of fires to keep the rent paid, but he's one of the few people who still manages to do only what he really wants to do. He's in some great projects with some great people, like Jimmy Hall, Dave Olney, Clyde Brooks, who's a great session producer. You know, Kenny's a man of impeccable integrity, he's like my right arm. He plays with his hands everything that I'm trying to do with my writing. He's, you know, my favorite guitar player that I've ever played with, that I've ever known, that I've ever SEEN. He brings together all the great root influences of rock-n-roll, from country and blues to psychedelic stuff to rockabilly to funk and jazz. He does it all. He's a supreme, consummate guitar player. He's like my alter-ego. As a guitar player he's everything I wish I was. (Laughs)

**NIR** Some people like to draw parallels between you and the Scorchers. How do you feel about that?

**WR** Uh, you say tomato, I say tomaato. You say potato, I say potaato. We're similar only in theory -- we're flip sides of the same coin, but I think we're...well, it's like apples and oranges; we're both fruits (stops, realized what he's actually said, then laughs) but the taste is different. (still laughing) I think our band and the Scorchers have all the same root influences, but the way we re-interpret those influences is radically different. They're very focused, very tightly focused, they're like a cross between Hank Williams and Iggy Pop, you know. They're like reckless abandon, country roots and an overlay of complete recklessness and chaos.

We're coming from a completely opposite vantage point. Part of what we do is country but we also like to bring in a lot of rockabilly, a lot of cajun and tex-mex type stuff. We try to start with a very wide base and hone all those influences into a very narrow sound. I think the Scorchers sort of take the opposite approach--they start with a very simple, very unsophisticated thing and expand on that.

**NIR** I understand the band has been in the studio a lot lately. Are you working on new material or making an EP or album of the stuff you already have?

**WR** Actually we're working on two studio projects at the moment. We're involved in one at Treasure Isle and we're mixing the sessions at Bennett House and we're trying to put together the pieces of an EP--we're gonna put out an EP as soon as we can. We also just started a new session with a very well-known big time Nashville producer who...  
**NIR** Shall remain nameless...

**WR** Shall remain nameless because of my superstitions. He wants to put together some hot demos and shop them around personally, which is great because he's well connected and if there's anyone in this town who can break in an unknown band, it's him. It's exciting as hell working with him because he's really good--he's got the Midas touch. He's got the producer's touch. What he does seems to turn to magic, to work. He brings out the best in all of us, and I'm very happy with the results so far. I figure between the two sessions we'll have plenty of material to put out our own independent EP, and we'll do that UNLESS we get signed with a deal before that and we won't have to put out an independent record. You know, I'll take it either way.

**NIR** Do you have any interested record companies?

**WR** Well, MCA Records is showing interest and RCA Records is showing interest. Things are looking good right now--we've got a good producer and we've got a hot band and we figure if we can come up with some good tapes it'll happen. We'd like to get signed out of Nashville, that would be the coolest thing.

**NIR** Why is that so important?

**WR** We'd be the first. Jason signed in L.A. **NIR** Tell me about working with Warner Hodges in the studio. I understand he played on a couple of tracks on the EP you're working on.

**WR** What a guy--the big cheese, Warner Hodges. He's great, a great guitar player, and it was

a real thrill working with him because, uh, because he's so good. He came in the first day of our session at Treasure Isle and he just scorched up the studio. He just burned, he torched the place, he smoked down the house, we had to call the fire department. (laughs) Anyway, it was a lot of fun. He and Kenny are each other's heroes. They both really respect each other's playing and to get them both in the studio was-- well, I was in guitar heaven because I'm a frustrated guitar player and they're two of my favorites. It was so much fun. We cut one track where Warner played lead and Kenny played rhythm--"Stay Away From Rock-n-Roll"--and one where Kenny played lead and Warner played rhythm--"Jenny Drives A Mustang." It was really great.

**NIR** Tell me about your acting career. Why music and not acting?

**WR** Well, both. I've been doing music a lot longer. But in the last couple of years it dawned on me, dumb f-ck that I am, that singing and acting are very similar. You're using the same emotions, you're just interpreting those emotions on different instruments. With singing and playing guitar you're using your voice and hands but with acting you do it with your speaking voice and your facial expressions and your gestures and all that. So it all comes from the same place, it's all emotions. You know, growing up in the South, everybody who's in the theatre department in school is a faggot, a sissy, a queer and you don't hang around them, you know? I mean, you can't go into a truckstop in Jackson, Mississippi and sit at the bar and talk to a truckdriver and he says "Hey, kid, whatta you do?" and you say "Oh, I'm an actor" (tries to sound feminine) because he'll hit you on the head, he'll squash you like a bug. But you can say "Hey, I'm a guitar player"--he'll like that. He'll pat you on the back and buy you a beer. Anyway, I've been taking classes, and I've been really lucky because I'm really a novice at this and I haven't had a lot of experience--I've done a few shows here in town and I just did a video...

**NIR** Tell us about the video, Will.

**WR** Well, I just got cast in a Waylon Jennings video that was a real thrill because I got to work around Waylon Jennings, Johnny Cash,

Robert Duvall, Minnie Pearl, Dustin Hoffman, David Bowie, uh, Albert Einstein...

**NIR** You ass. Come on, get serious.

**WR** Anyway, I was really lucky, it was a real fluke because I've had very little experience and they were willing to take a gamble on me and I gave it my best shot. I think what I was supposed to be in the video was a young waylon. We were back in the Fifties and I was driving around in a '53 Packard and then a '57 T-Bird. We shot at all the hotspots in town--Sam Davis Hotel, Black Poodle Saloon in Printer's Alley, different "country" locations, out in Franklin at a little church, out at the racetrack. Everything there was to do around here, we did it. It was great. Just being around people like waylon Jennings, Johnny Cash and Robert Duvall was a big thrill for me because they're three of my favorite performers in the world--they're LIVING LEGENDS. I loved every minute of it. **NIR** What do you think it will do for your acting career?

**WR** I think it will bring it all to a screeching halt. (laughs) Well, actually I'm scared shitless to see it. I want to get as much distance from it as I can. (still laughing) I really don't even want to see it. They're supposed to have a screening party soon.

**NIR** Are you going?

**WR** (laughs) I hope not. I hope I'm out of town. I'm scared to see it, I really am.

**NIR** What's your ultimate goal? Are there any special personal goals you'd like to discuss?

**WR** When I was graduating from high school and they were giving out class predictions, you know what mine was?

**NIR** Most likely to record?

**WR** No. Anyway, I don't know where the hell they got this, but they said I was going to be the first man to get married on the moon.

I hope someday to live up to that.

**NIR** That's your special personal goal?

**WR** Oh, was that the question? Well, I've never been the marrying type, but I would like to go to the moon sometime. In fact, I'd like to do a rock-n-roll video on the moon. No, I wouldn't want to get married on the moon but I would like to go up there and check it out.

**NIR** That's your personal goal, huh?

**WR** (adamantly) I WANT TO GO TO THE MOON!

**NIR** Will, please.

**WR** Okay, okay. No, I want to make records and...I WANT IT ALL! EVERYTHING! I want to make good records, I want to keep growing as a singer and a player and I want to keep writing--writing's the biggest kick of all. My goal is to keep on getting inspiration from God knows where it comes and to write, just to keep writing. Now, I want to make hit records, I really do, you know, I want to make albums that say something. Things that people will listen to and remember and sing in the shower. I also want to get into film, to do music videos, but also do other kinds of films, and live theatre. And I'd like for the two things to come together--singing and acting--that's why video is so great. And I do want to go to the moon. I want to a video on the moon! That is my ultimate goal--to do a video, a live concert video on the moon.

# CANTRELL'S

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SUN-JULY 22

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FRI-JULY 20:

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AND THE MOVEMENT

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ETC

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**REPORT**

LETTER GIRL: Lynn Cusley

An open letter to the management of WEDA

1. When KDA's big brother, KDF, began picking up on "nurok", ADA should've shifted their focus towards more adventurous musical forms, including independent releases. If I wanted to hear Michael Jackson, Culture Club, Nena, The Fixx, Duran Duran, etc. I could tune in KDF and have a nice, clean, powerful FM stereo signal to deal with. If I was going to fight with a wimpy AM signal, it had better be worth my while. Let's face it, there's no way KDA could ever compete with it's big brother in an AOK format, yet that's precisely what they tried to do. Since when does Asia, or Huey Lewis play new-rock? I'd rather tune in WUW and hear something like Violent Femmes, or even The Dead Kennedys back to back with some local music, and who cares if the W's sound immature and unprofessional, at least they were sincere about what they were doing (KDA's jocks sounded like they could be less about what they were playing). KDA should've been allowed to have it's own identity. Hell, they didn't even EXIST before 10 AM! New-rockers came to work in the morning also, and I for one, thank Earl P. Mayfield is silly and obnoxious, and I don't like to hear him first thing in the morning, if ever. KDA was never given anything in the way of a promotional push. Where were the ADA window-stickers? Men Talking Heads, a leading new-rock act, played at Municipal, where were the ADA banners? I saw KDF's. Now that KDA's switched to an all-dinosaur format, they've got billboards all over town. Hi Ho.

All I've had my say, I guess I'll have to stick to my cassettes a while longer...

## Designs and Theory

By Dominique Nodrix

The comic strip consists of six panels. In the first panel, a man with a beard and a woman with long hair are shown. The man says, "She hasn't waiting for you Pablo!!" and the woman responds, "after all". In the second panel, the man is now a large, muscular figure and says, "You had too much to drink last night, but it's your life's". In the third panel, the man is now a small, thin figure and says, "I'm a whopper!!". In the fourth panel, the man is now a small, thin figure and says, "Stay again!!". In the fifth panel, the man is now a large, muscular figure and says, "To you by choice Pablo!!". In the sixth panel, the man is now a large, muscular figure and says, "To you by choice Pablo!!". A sign in the background lists numbers: 12345, 6789, 101112, 131415, 161718, 192021, 2223.

We here at the KIR have been besieged lately by a bunch of releases from various organizations which want to help up and coming independant musicians find their audiences.

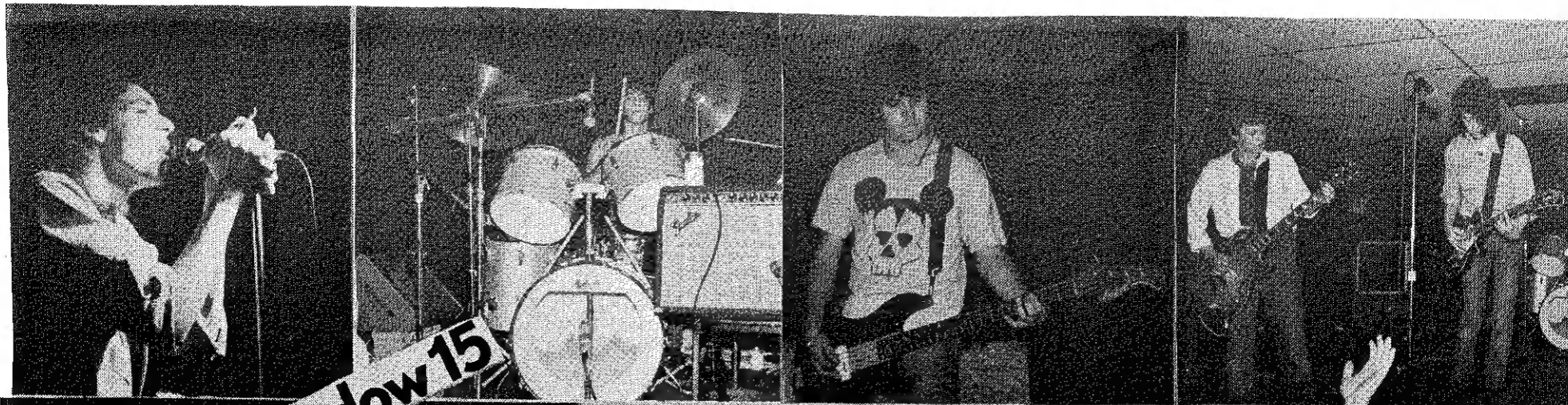
WCSB 89.3/FM, Cleveland State University: University Tower, Room 956; Cleveland, Ohio 44115 is a 1000 Watt college station, highly diversified with a strong independent focus that plays alltypes of music. They are in stereo 24 hours a day and are seeking music to fill up the time. They have cassette capability and would love to get your music-and play it for their listeners.

PAN-the Performing Artists Network of North America, at Box 162; Skipack, PA 19474 or phone (215) 489-4640, has over 5000 members in all 50 states and 16 countries and is dedicated to adding performers reach their full potential. They've set up the first electronic bulletin board in the music industry. Through this computer network anyone can post and read notices by musicians, producers, booking agents, etc. as well as electronically send and receive mail anywhere in the world. They also have extensive data banks for mailing list purposes. Self-produced albums and tapes can be bought and sold through an Independent Release Index. If you don't have a computer, you can still use the service by signing up to receive a bi-weekly summary of the major listings. It looks like this could be a valuable tool for bands that could apply it to their situations, so drop them a line or call if you're interested in more information.

by Dominique Knitrix

[illegible]





Shadow 15



ARBITRARYS



Paper Dolls

## N.I.R. BENEFIT 2

ALL BIG PHOTOS BY BEVERLY BLACK

I asked Rick Champion to write a review of the bands that played at the NIR Benefit since he was working stage and I was working the door and he got to see much more than I did. I did want to thank everyone who came out to support the bands and our publication, though. About 200 of you made it down to Cantrell's and we raised about \$450 to keep on doing what we're doing, for which I am most grateful. NIR is like the United Way; thanks to you it's working...Andy

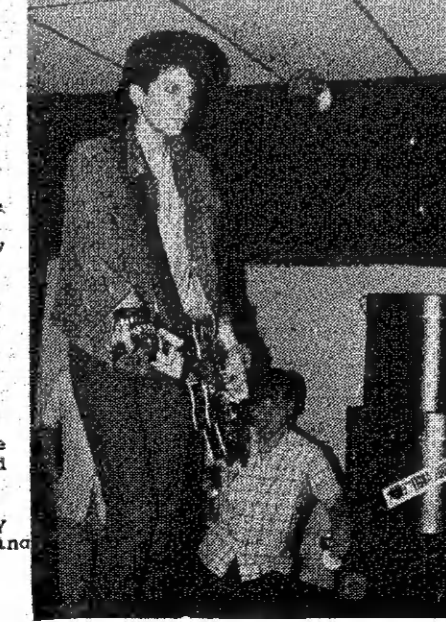
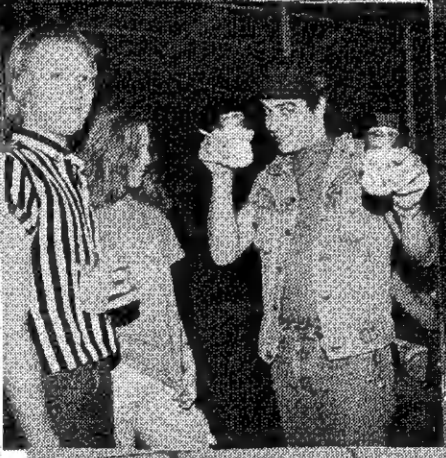
Leading off the show was the all female PAPER DOLLS--this night, however, the ladies were assisted by Beaver Frost on bass guitar. PAPER DOLLS got the show off to a good start and seemed to be building a rousing set when they encountered some heavy technical difficulties. Finally, the set was cut a good third short--Donna wasn't too excited about playing 4-string guitar for the rest of the night. Too bad ladies (and gent) but a solid A for the effort is in order for sure.

The second band was the out-of-town guest from Knoxville, the ARBITRARYS. Although they aren't really a so-called hard core band they did play a powerfully raw set. The slammers had ample opportunity to do their typically slaming trip and even had a chance for their fondest dream come true and got to crawl up on the stage and jump around as part of the show. The ARBITRARYS did a great job of jacking up the crowd's energy level and were probalay the best of the Knoxville bands to come and play Nashville in quite a while.

The third band was the newest Nashville band to play. RING OF FIRE kicked the energy level up even higher and kept the dancers going strong. This was just their fourth show in Nashville but already they have built up quite a following and provided a very crowd pleasing performance. (see article on ROF elsewhere in this issue)

The head line act of the NIR show was SHADOW 15. Their show was without a doubt the best performance I have seen them do. The addition of the rhythm guitar has made a 100% positive difference in their set. They were quite obviously "up" for the benefit and delivered a very tight and powerful set. The past several months SHADOW 15 has made a reputation for providing good shows and so far the NIR show seems to be their crowning success.

Indeed the entire show was a big success--everything went quite smoothly, the bands all seemed very pleased and were most co-operative. The lights, provided by Factual and done by Skot Nelson helped create a good atmosphere and the sound was handled with the quality and care that we have all come to expect from Cantrell's sound-man Jeff. Perhaps the only person who didn't thoroughly enjoy the NIR show was our own Andy Anderson who had to work the door and therefore, missed seeing the entire show--sorry Andy, but hey, somebody's got to be responsible for all that work!



Ring of Fire





## JOE "KING" CARRASCO

THE CROWNS

It's a sad thought that there are actually people in this great land of ours who have never heard of Joe "King" Carrasco or experienced the Tex-Mex madness the King and his Crowns have been constantly delivering for years. But that's apparently the case, for when the Carrasco caravan pulled into Nashville to play Ziggy's back in late May, most of the good King's subjects were nowhere to be found. The loyal few who did attend, however, saw a show Ziggy's will have to go a long way to top. Battling the sound system throughout, Joe and the Crowns played high on 90 minutes of their non-stop taco rock and emerged triumphant after all. Carrasco set about from the outset to breakdown the audience/preformer barrier and succeeded, transforming Ziggy's from rock club to party palace. As usual, Joe couldn't be kept on the stage; he was constantly running through the crowd, dancing on tables, and at one point played a flawless guitar solo while walking the length of the four foot railing that surrounded the dance floor. After the show, I was granted an audience with the King and we spoke about his music, his career, and the mania that's kept him going all this time:

NIR: Are you and the band still on MCA? I was calling their offices here beforehand and nobody seemed to know.  
JOE: No, we just got off. We've been trying to get off MCA for about two years and finally got off.

NIR: Obviously it didn't work out, but why'd you sign with MCA in the first place?  
JOE: I don't know. That's a good question; people ask me that all the time. Our management just came to me and said, "It's either MCA or IRS", and this was before IRS had the GoGo's or anybody, and like fools we signed with MCA. I don't know, it just seemed like the best choice at the time. We did two really good records with them I thought, but they never really pushed us. They never released a single or video or nothing from our last album; we paid for our video (of "Party Weekend") ourselves.  
NIR: Are you working on any new material now that you're off of MCA?  
JOE: Yeah, we just got through recording 19 songs and we'll be doing some more when we get back off this tour.  
NIR: Will you be label shopping or putting it out on your own independently?  
JOE: I don't know really. We already did this new single we just put out. Basically, we'll just feel it out, and if we get it all finished and we still haven't signed with anyone we'll just put it out ourselves, that to me is the easiest way of doing it. I've been on several record labels, and I really don't think I'm an unreasonable type of person, but I've found most of them pretty unreasonable.  
NIR: Is that because the major labels are at a loss at what to do with your type of music?  
JOE: Yeah, I think they are. Most record people don't

## FACTUAL

-ANDY

Hi Ho Hi Ho. Here we go again with a bunch of informative reviews of local and national independent releases we've been sent. It's been a hot summer so far so try and stay cool by grooving on some of these I'll recommend. All of these reviews are by me except for the Factual review by Allen Green which starts us off:

Factual's latest vinyl offering could be a turning point in their career. While the "B" side, a remix of last year's "Psychotic Romance", sticks to the Factual tradition of strong, unwavering 4/4 beat supporting thick electronic textures in a non-stop dance assault, the "A" side, "For the Song" shows Factual capable of delivering a solid punch in a more commercial song-oriented format. "For the Song" is based on a strong melodic hook, and is structured so that it builds to a strong climax and ends smoothly, yet it still contains the characteristic Factual beat and psychedelic flavor. This cut seems guaranteed to snag some long-overdue radio airtime (indeed, it already has in some parts of the country). If you've never bought a Factual record, then this is a good one to start with, and if Factual is already part of your collection, then this is a necessity.

Thanks Allen. Let's begin my comments by looking at the latest crop of goodies from dB and PRESS records. You can get ordering info about the next 4 discs from 432 Moreland Ave., N.E., Atlanta, Georgia, 30307.

METHOD ACTORS--Luxury-- Athens, GA's late great Method Actors broke up almost three years ago following the recording of this LP in San Francisco, and the studio where the master tapes were then proceeded to burn down. So, all of that considered it was quite a surprise that this LP got out at all, and it was an even bigger surprise to hear it and find in its grooves some of the best work the Method Actors ever laid down. Vic Varney's guitar, bass, and vocal riffs blend with primal drum beats in traditional manic Method Actors' style, but the addition of Stan Satin (ex-Vietnam) on sax and Michael Richmond (from Love Tractor) on guitar and backing vocals have given the Actors a fuller, more accessible sound. This is a fine record with KILLER songs: "Detective" creeps along a chugging bass line; the title cut is an extended pseudo-Lounge Lizardish jam; "House On Fire" features Vic in a screechy falsetto vocal; and "The Problem" features ultra-complex arrangements and vocals. To top it all off is the definitive rock out version of the Velvet's classic "All Tomorrow's Parties", probably the best tune any Athens band has cut. The Method Actors didn't survive, but I'm sure glad Luxury did. Highly recommended.

SPORT OF KINGS--Parade-- Sport of Kings hail from Chicago and have been together and recording as a two-piece since 1980. Parade marks their debut album as a "real" band (i.e. capable of playing live) and the material on this EP represents a change of direction for the band. No longer can SOK be considered a "down" band as they were earlier (best evidenced on their Joy Divisionish "Sing Mary Sing", a minor '82 hit included on SubPop 5); now their sound is as much more party/dance orientated. On Parade Sport of Kings sound is densely textured with a hard, honest pop edge making for a highly danceable EP. The centerpiece, "A Fire Is Burning" is a natural for club play and gives the band a chance to work out. Parade is very pretty EP that uses synthesizers the way they were meant to be used and is worth buying for that reason alone.

BUZZ OF DELIGHT--Sound Castles-- The Buzz of Delight is a two man group from Athens, Georgia that began playing together in the fall of '83. Lead singer Matthew Sweet from Lincoln, Nebraska (where opportunity for a musical career is limited) moved to Athens as the result of correspondence between him and members of various Athens' bands, specifically ChOK and R.E.M.. Once there, he lent his guitar talent to ChOK's furthermore what EP before hooking up with drummer David Pearce, a former member of ChOK. Last October they travelled to Charlotte to record Sound Castles at Reflection Studios, where R.E.M. recorded Murmur. They worked with Don Dixon, R.E.M.'s co-producer, and made sonic use of melodicas, swamp boxes, and bagbones, as well as instruments you've heard of. The result is a near perfect summer record, light, airy, and danceable. The tunes hop along in a myriad of directions with hooks, hooks, hooks! Matthew has a marvelous voice that sounds like a cross between Kitch Easter and Donovan, and puts it to good use singing songs about the South, Summer, and Christmas. Buzz Of Delight have added some people to augment their sound so they can begin playing live, but until they come through our town you owe it to yourself to check out this excellent EP.

know where to classify Tex-Mex; they don't know where to put it. Especially being based in Texas, we're not in the L.A. scene where you can court the record companies. We're out in the sticks and can't just go play at their conventions...

NIR: How'd you get into rock and roll in the first place?  
JOE: Playing guitar (laughs). I've been doing it since the 4th Grade.

NIR: Before I forget, I wanted to ask you about the "Party Christmas" video I saw on MTV during December. Did that song ever make it out on record? It was great...

JOE: No, MCA never put that out either. They still own it. Richard Gottschler (producer of Party Weekend) and I kinda wrote it, arranged it, and did it in MTV's studio. I think it's a great song. That song we played tonight, "Current Events Are Making Me Tense" has the same riff as "Party Christmas", 'cause I wanted to keep it around and not lose it. I thought MCA would release it; I feel it's the best Christmas song ever recorded, but MCA never saw that. MCA never noticed that Michael Jackson recorded on "Don't Let A Woman (Take A Fool Out Of You)" on our first album with them. I'm not sour about that, but there's a lot they missed.

NIR: Yeah, it seems you're the only person in the world to sing a song with Michael Jackson and not have a hit. How did you meet up with him?

JOE: He was just there in the studio next door. I saw Michael every day for about six weeks, and finally one day I said, "Come on over and record on this song," and he did. He's a nice guy, even though he wears a white glove (laughs); I wear a crown.

NIR: How'd you come up with the "King" tag and crown idea?  
JOE: Well, in south Texas there's a lot of "king" type things; everyone's king of this and king of that. You're around all this royalty sort of; plus in L.A. a lot of the Cajun groups are lead by Prince or Count so and so. I was already called Carrasco, so I said, "Let's put the 'King' on it. I've always liked James Brown and Sam the Sham, so the cape and crown and all sorta reflect tradition. I wish I'd been born an organ player with a cape (laughs)."

NIR: Where do you like to play the most?  
JOE: Columbia. I like playing to Latin audiences; it's real interesting. It's real fun to play for the deaf too; we've played for a few deaf schools and blind schools, and they really liked it and us. It's always fun to take rock and roll to people who've never really heard too much of it.

NIR: What's the strangest show you've ever done?  
JOE: Man, there's a bunch of them. We're a dance band, right, so when we don't get people dancing you wonder what you're doing wrong... When I was playing in a Mexican band earlier on, a guy came in with an axa one time and started swinging it around at the audience; that was definitely weird... Our shows are always really wild. I throw myself into the audience a lot when we play in Texas. People also tend to dive off the balconies when we play, and sometimes people don't catch them...

NIR: What type of music do you listen to and like?  
JOE: Mostly I listen to a lot of Chicano and San Antonio music. San Antonio has got the best music in the U.S. It's death to stay there, but it's got the most soul of any city in the country, and I've been everywhere.

NIR: What do you do in your time off the road?  
JOE: I like to stay in Mexico and Central America... laying on the beach grooving out under the palm trees and thinking about life's mysteries.

NIR: Sounds great. Any closing comments for our readers?

JOE: Rock esta noche!

NIR: Translated loosely?

JOE: Let's rock tonight!

The latest 45 from Joe "King" Carrasco and the Crowns is "Walk It Like You Talk It"/"Cucaracha Taco" and it's a goodie. The tunes tipify what's great about the King--the cheesy organ, dance beat, witty lyrics, and a real roots feel; it's all here. Hopefully a major label will pick up Joe and his Crowns, but you shouldn't wait until then to hear these cuts. Order them direct from Lisa Records; P.O. Box 12233; Austin, Texas; 78711 for \$3 and be the envy of your friends. ---ANDY

ESSENTIAL FIRMAMENT AND THE ELEMENTS--EP-- A strange little effort from brothers Bruce ("Video Killed The Radio Star") and Guv Woolley. This is the soundtrack of the two's GOG video collage, which has been out for a couple of years (and even made it on to Night Flight). The six tunes here aren't much to write home about, however. While there are some clever moments, for the most part none of these songs are more than fragments and don't work too well without their video accompaniment.

WINDBREAKERS--Any Monkey With A Typewriter-- This 6-song EP is pure pop from (of all places) Jackson, Mississippi. This delightful Mitch Easter-produced EP is well worth seeking out if you like popish, roots rock and roll. The Windbreakers come across like a cross between the DB's and Flamin' Groovies and leave me hungry for more. A joy from the opening rocker "Rerun" ("Everything you do is just a rerun/It's all been done before/Everything you do is just a rerun/But I'm always back for more...") to the gentle "I'll Be There" which closes, Any Monkey... is highly recommended and well worth ordering from Tim Lee! P.O. Box 31217; Jackson, Miss. 39206. Trivia note: Mitch Easter plays on five of the tracks; Richard Barone of the Bongos on one.

ROCKIN' SHAPES--"Getting Through You"/"Cracked Marbles"-- Lafayette, Louisiana also seems an unlikely place to look for pop heroes, but that's what the Rockin' Shapes are. None of the three guys who are the Rockin' Shapes look to be over 18, yet they've managed to come up with two fresh tunes that are instant pop classics in my book. Great lyrics (i.e. "I want action from the clothes on my floor"), casual but entrancing harmonies, and they're catchy as Hell too. Nothing fancy here, but a surprising find well worth seeking out from HomeRecords; 119 Amelia; Lafayette, LA 70501

U-MEN--4-song EP-- If Jim Morrison and Iggy Pop could defy the laws of nature and produce a son, he might sing and write something like the U-Men's John Bigley. John's lyrics are unique and disturbing in the best 60's tradition but go far beyond what anyone came up with then (i.e. "A moonlight drive to seaside/tide's low, you're high/sad but true/yeah I know too well/flowers don't grow in hell"). Musically, U-Men draw upon the style of 60's Northwest garage punk (ala the Sonics) and their speeding, surging sound not only keeps up with John's vocal antics but drives things ever onward to gloomy oblivion. The U-Men are stark and compelling and deserve to be heard. Write Bomb Shelter; 1506 E. Olive Way; Seattle, Washington; 98102 for more info and do it now!

CUNTS--"Apocalyptic Breakfast"/"Turn Of Night"-- From their name and the cover you'd be tempted to classify the Cunts as hardcore, but they're not. Regardless of what label you put on it, this self-made 45 is pretty lame. It was recorded live, so the synthesizer, drums, and vocals are about all that penetrates the mix, and none of that, alone or together, do enough to save this single from mediocrity. If you're really interested write! Disturbing Records; Box 11463; Chicago, Illinois; 60611



PAPER DOLLS PICS BY GINA ?!



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GET SMART! That's the name and message of a phenomenal trio that originated 3 years ago in Lawrence, Kansas (a town they term "Berlin On The Plains" in one of their songs) and have just recently completed a move to Chicago, their new base of operations. GET SMART! consists of Marc Koch (guitar, vocals), Lisa Wertman (bass, vocals) and the aptly named Frank Loose (drums), and together they're one of the best bands you'll ever see or hear. The members of GET SMART! are in tune with each other, their audience, and the music business and are a breath of fresh air to people like me who've watched new music bands come and go. For the members of GET SMART! believe in themselves and what they're doing with their lives and music. Their music calls up virtually every emotion: from aggression to serenity, from disappointment to pride, from disillusion to knowing confidence, and back again as one fan observed. It's been about two months since GET SMART! played to a handful of people at Cantrell's, but they've just released a new album Action/Reaction (on Fever Records out of Chicago) and it is superb. This is one band with some things to say that everyone should hear and heed; hopefully what follows will interest you enough to seek out their record and turn out to see them the next time that they're here:

**NIR:** You just moved to Chicago; how does the scene there compare to what you left in Lawrence, Kansas?  
**FRANK:** Well, they're completely different.  
**MARC:** It also depends on what time you're talking about too. When we first started there were a few local bands, and out of our boredom with ourselves we formed a band, and then it seemed to generate some more things and other bands started forming. I come from Chicago, and the Chicago scene changes so drastically every year it's a whole new group of bands. We just went back to Lawrence and there's a whole different scene going on there.  
**FRANK:** The major difference to me is that people seem to be a whole lot more honest in Lawrence in that they'll let you know they like you. They'll dance for you; they'll do anything. They really love music there. In Chicago, not that there aren't people who like music, but there are a lot more people who just like to pose and hang around the fringes and be seen. They don't like the music as much as they like the scene, the feeling of being "alternative" and "underground".  
**NIR:** How have you all been characterized by the Chicago scenesters?  
**FRANK:** I don't think they've found a label for us yet. We've just kinda been hanging out. A lot of our friends are really into psychedelia and stuff, but we're not like that at all. I really don't think there are too many bands like us in Chicago.  
**LISA:** One thing that is interesting is that we seem to have something of a hardcore audience. Maybe it's the energy or the emotion, but I have noticed a lot of hardcore people coming to our shows.  
**MARC:** It is really interesting that over the last three and a half years of GET SMART! the people who voice their approval of the band are like bikers and hardcore people. They'll come up and go, "Well, you're not a hardcore band, but I still really like you."  
**FRANK:** We do like to keep a raw edge in our music...  
**NIR:** Tell us a little about your song lyrics and what you're trying to get across with your music.  
**MARC:** That's one thing we've always tried to concentrate on, because an important part of the whole essence of rock and roll is what people are talking about and that there is a message in it. You can go out there and sing about love and stuff and make it real fluffy, and people can get real drunk and pass out and not care about what you said the night before. Not that that many people remember what we say and all, but hopefully there's a message in what we play that's a little bit different for each person. We think lyrics are very important.  
**NIR:** What are your lyrics saying to people?  
**MARC:** I don't know, just to maybe make people a little more

# GET SMART!



aware of where they're at. I don't think there's a specific message other than just to think about what you're listening to, what you put on in the morning, what you watch on TV, your job, you know, where do you fit into society? I don't even know if that's right either...  
**FRANK:** I think our lyrics are very much open to interpretation, and they're not at all literal, because our type of lyrics seem to be more beneficial to an audience with an open mind. They can evaluate and apply those lyrics to themselves and their situations, and so can the guys sitting next to them. It's not so blatant or so literal that it only applies to ourselves or to one type of situation.  
**MARC:** There's not one definition to any set of lyrics we have. I think we're just trying to build an awareness in our audience. I think if that happens we've been successful. It's like the name, GET SMART!  
**LISA:** It might even be that something we sing about or a riff that we play will inspire someone to talk to us later, and in that sense we get to know people and maybe spread what the band is about to a few people in each town.  
**MARC:** Even in a place like this, we'll come out and we'll sweat for even fewer people than we had here, because that's important. Those people came here for a reason, whether there's 1000 or 12 it doesn't matter, we're still going to put on a show that makes us at least sweat and hopefully gets some sort of reaction going in them. Whether they sweat or not, whether they sit back or not doesn't matter; hopefully we can cause them to think a little bit and realize that just sitting back and absorbing is just not the key to fulfillment in your life.  
**LISA:** We were talking about this the other day, and someone said there's a fine line between bands that entertain and bands that try to get a message across. I think some bands are merely entertainment and some bands are trying to say something, and I think we're here to say something, but we try to entertain as well. Nobody wants a completely maudlin band up on stage that just makes you want to cry in your beer.  
**MARC:** I think our biggest message is GET SMART! That's why

we chose the name. It has no connection to the TV show. **FRANK:** We could have just as easily chose the name Be Aware! or Do Something!...  
**MARC:** It really doesn't matter what people do as long as they do something and are active in their own lives, in a scene, or whatever. Everyone seems to get too comfortable after a while and wants someone else to do the performing. Lawrence, Kansas is a perfect example. A lot of people did want us to do all the acting, do the performing, do the generating of a scene, but that was not our intent, our purpose, or our responsibility. We just said something and were hoping it would generate some response, and it did.  
**FRANK:** People all too often, I think, are told what to like, be it radio, press, TV, or whatever. We're against that; we want people to make decisions for themselves.  
**NIR:** Do you think because of that, your attitude and message, you'll have a hard time getting onto radio and moving up in the music business?  
**MARC:** I don't think we really think about that. There is no formula behind how we write music, and there really are no long term goals. Really, there is no set pattern to the way we write music and what we accomplish. It's a very instant thing; we'll just wait until we get to that point and then we'll start to choose when those things arise. Hopefully, we can just keep up our energy and convey it to other people who can choose for themselves how to interpret it, just as long as it does something and they react in some way. That's why we chose the title Action/Reaction for our LP. There's so much interaction between performer and audience and we want to draw upon that.  
**LISA:** It's fun to have people who, even if they don't understand us, yell and do crazy stuff rather than just sit like they're watching TV. Give us some response, whether it's positive or negative.  
**MARC:** We act and they react. Even hecklers to us are a very positive reaction, because we've managed to generate some response in people. Whatever happens is positive for us.  
 ---ANDY

## OH=OK

Athens, Georgia's OH=OK are much more than an okay band; they manage to encompass everything you've ever loved about Athens' sound and scene and look to be the next band to break from there. Currently consisting of Linda Hopper (voice), Lynda Stipe (bass, voice), David McNeil (drums), and Lynn Blakey (guitar), OH=OK formed out of the Athens' party scene about four years ago around the vocal interaction between Linda and Lynda and were noted for their loose, playful nature and their highly danceable but minimal (no guitars then) sound, documented on the four song/five minute WOW EP. Following WOW, the band added a succession of guitarists to fill out their sound, none of whom seemed to really fit in. Happily, OH=OK now appears to have found a guitarist that fits their sound and approach in Lynn Blakey, a North Carolinian who'd played in a number of groups there including an early version of Let's Active. They had just released their new 6-song 12" EP furthermore. What when they came to play Cantrell's May 20 on their way up to New York. furthermore what, produced by wonderkid Mitch Easter and the band, finds OH=OK taking off in all sorts of new directions and styles while retaining their straight-ahead sound and approach that first got them noticed. "Such 'n Such" is a tribute to the Athens' party scene; "There was this party/ I went to that was all/ No big event really/ I call it my own/ But to be sure/ had I not gone/ I would have never been," sings Linda H while Lynda S lays down a snakey bass line. The girls' voices are truly lovely and when they combine with the music's subtle hooks on songs like the mesmerizing "Choukoutien" and the mysterious "Elaine's Song" it's enough to send shivers down your spine. "Giddy-Up" and "Guru" are dance tunes with terrific breaks and beats, but there's no easy way to label "Straight" which begins with "Red rover, red rover/ Please send her a lover/ She needs someone above her/ 'Cause her boys are in school" before going into the old nursery rhyme "1, 2, Buckle my shoe...". All in all, the EP is one of this year's best releases and you are strongly advised to check it out and discover its joys.  
 Being a long time fan of the band (and returning to our story), I got together with the band during their sound check at Cantrell's and it rapidly became apparent that one of the reasons OH=OK are so much fun to watch is because they have so much fun playing and being together. They're one big happy family; Lyn, Linda, and Lynda are constantly chattering and joking about everything under the sun, while David plays big brother, taking care of the details and watching out for the girls. The show at Cantrell's was surprisingly well attended for a Sunday, and OH=OK had everyone grooving and dancing. They're a band that gets better everytime I see them and they have the talent and dedication to get to the top. I talked with the band about some of the above, and here's what they had to say:  
**NIR:** I guess the first place to start could be with Lynn,

your new guitar player...  
**Linda H:** We were driving along the highway one night and Brian, our guitar player then, reminded us that he wasn't going to be a permanent member, and we were coming back home and Lynda and I were wracking our brains about what we should do, and one of us said, "What about Lynn Blakey?"  
**Lynda S:** I called up and talked to her mother...  
**Linda H:** Her mother is incredible.  
**Lynda S:** She said, "It's fate! She's been talking about it."  
**Lynn:** It's true. 'Cause my band broke up about the same time as you guys were looking for someone. I was saying, "Well I just ought to go down to Athens and join Oh-OK." I was thinking of bands I knew when I said that, and then they called...  
**Linda H:** It's so great that it's worked out. It was a very smooth transition.  
**Lynda S:** Oh, and it was finally the third girl. I don't feel like we're turning into a "girl" band, but it's still really neat...  
**NIR:** What do you think about that David?  
**Lynda S:** Male drummers are really easy to get along with; male guitarists, sometimes, they have big egos.  
**Linda H:** People who aren't in on the conception of a band are harder to fit in once you've already started. Most of our other guitarists have had other projects, their own private things they wanted to do.  
**Lynda S:** Not only that, but most of the songs were written with just the bass, so a lot of them felt they were just supplementing something and weren't really necessary, but guitar can add so much to a bass line. Lynn's been making new songs out of all our old bass originals.  
**David:** Which is good. All of the other people we had, really only one of the other guitar players spent any time trying to figure out a decent part to play with the songs, something that fitted and sounded good.  
**Linda H:** But Lynn is working really hard, the hardest of us all. I think everyone in the band is really happy now about what we're doing, so we'll just try to put on as many good shows as we can.  
**NIR:** Is this your first major tour with Lynn on guitar?  
**Lynda S:** Well, we had a little major tour...  
**Linda H:** Yeah, it was a small major tour, up the East coast. We'd never played Washington, D.C. before, and we played the 9:30 club which was really nice. We did New Haven, Connecticut and Boston... Oh, at some point you should ask us about Athens' music and up and coming bands so we can talk about Go Van Gogh...  
**NIR:** Okay, let's talk about that now.  
**Linda H:** Go Van Gogh has Vic (from the Method Actors), Dana (from Vietnam), Robert (used to play bass with Wee Wee Pole), and Juan (drummer from the Little Tigers).  
**David:** Robert the bass player is from the dreaded Wee Wee Pole. He's a really good bass player, and everyone was surprised that Vic was able to snatch him away from Wee Wee

Pole.  
**Lynda S:** Right now in Athens there's a lot of psychedelia. Fashion Battery are good and seem pretty psychedelic.  
**Linda H:** It seems they've moved that way. Killkenny Kats were always that way from the very beginning, with that grating guitar sound. Then there's Dreams So Real, I like them; they're a three piece. All three members are sort of new in town and they just sort of fell together. It's psychedelic, but not really Californian. It's, it's...  
**NIR:** Psychedelic Athens?  
**Linda H:** Yeah. I think bands are starting to move toward a heavier sound, slower you know...  
**Lynda S:** Yeah, like there are some country-type things in Athens too. Everybody's been thinking about it and now it seems everyone's beginning to write country songs...  
**Linda H:** Like that Love Tractor song (sings and is joined by Lynda and Lynn) "Spin your partner/round and round". Love Tractor are great, but they've been gone from town for so long people forget they're around.  
**NIR:** Let's talk about furthermore what some. Are you pleased with the way it turned out?  
**Linda H:** More than pleased. I really am proud of the record. I knew it was a good record and I'm glad it's doing as well as it's doing on the independent charts; it's somewhere between 8 and 9.  
**NIR:** How do you feel about the band's image?  
**Linda H:** I don't like the concept of an image because I think it sounds so contrived, but I think it should be thought about. The girl who interviewed us earlier (who was from a small town local access channel and whose goal was to someday interview Van Halen) kept on making comparisons to the GoGo's and that sort of makes me mad.  
**David:** They're just no connection other than maybe a mild visual connection. It's not the same stuff; it doesn't even sound the same.  
**NIR:** Have you been writing lots of new songs?  
**Linda H and Lynda S (in unison):** Oh yeah, we've been working hard.  
**NIR:** Are there plans to play England?  
**David:** It's a possibility. Our record company is going to release the record in England and Europe. Hopefully if we get a good response we'll be able to slip over there.  
**Linda H:** That would be great, but at this point it seems like a dream because it'd be very expensive. We'd have to fly; we couldn't drive our van there... I've been wanting to go to California; we're going there this summer. I've never seen San Francisco or Berkeley. Lynda and I can't wait to get to Minneapolis 'cause we've heard so much about it. I heard it has a really together scene.  
**NIR:** Well, let's wind down. Any closing comments?  
**Linda H:** I don't have any; I'm just real excited about being on the road again.  
**David:** And if everyone who reads this will go out and buy our record it'll help us a lot and they'll like it too.  
 ---Article and Interview by Andy---